

**Minutes: Bloomington/Monroe County MPO Policy and Technical Advisory Committee**  
**Meeting November 14, 2003**  
**1:00pm-3:30pm**

*Policy and Technical Advisory Committee Minutes are transcribed in a summarized manner. Audiotapes are available in the Planning Department for full reference.*

The Policy and Technical Advisory Committees of the Bloomington/Monroe County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) met on November 14, 2003 at 12:30pm in the City Council Room at the Showers Center City Hall.

***Attendance***

MPO: Jeff Ellington, Lynne Coyne, Andy Ruff, Kent McDaniel, Jack Baker, Joyce Poling, Marty Hawk, Bill Stuebe, Vaneta Kumar (for Carter Keith), John Freeman, John Fernandez

TAC: Justin Wykoff, Bob Cowell, John Carter, Jewell Echelbager, S. Bruce Payton, Tony Desimone, Emmanuel Nsonwu

Staff: Tom Micuda, Frank Nierzwicki, Karyn Ryg, Tricia Collingwood, & Amanda DeBock

- I. Minutes to be Approved: October 10, 2003  
Minutes for the October 10, 2003 meeting were approved.
- II. Reports and Updates
  - A. Citizens Advisory Committee Update:  
10<sup>th</sup> and the Bypass  
Bryan Park Park and Ride Survey Public meeting will be held at the Monroe County Library on November 18.
- III. Old Business
  - A. None
- IV. New Business
  - A. Amendment to the Bloomington/Monroe County Year 2025 Transportation Plan (Long Range Plan) to recognize the recommendation of Route 3c as a potential corridor for Interstate 69.  
Tom Micuda director of the City of Bloomington Planning Department explained to the attendees the LRP and the amendment to it. Considerable work for some time has led to discussion with INDOT to recommend adding to the executive summary of the LRP the amended addition.
  - B. Amendment to the Transportation Improvement Program to include the Tier 2 environmental and engineering assessment studies of the I-69 Impact Study. Tom also described the TIP Program summarizing INDOT's request to add an amendment to Tier 2 assessment.

V. Public Comment: Includes comments from those who represent organization and individuals in the community.

Jim Shelton – Southern Indiana Business Alliance

Crane will be directly impacted by the I-69 project. Crane now has over 500 employees and over 100 contractor employees (all of which commute there everyday from the Bloomington area). There are also over 50,000 visitors that come to Crane each year. It will be important to be sure Crane is easily accessible. On behalf of Southern Indiana Business Alliance, Jim Shelton strongly urges addition of these amendments.

Denise Lessow – Chair of the Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce

Denise said this should be in our plans to include these amendments. It would be irresponsible not to do so. The Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce supports these amendments.

Thomas Tokarski – Citizens for Appropriate Rural Roads

I-69 is not a “done deal”. There is a long process yet to be implemented. There is no requirement to include I-69 in the Long Range Plan (LRP) or Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) at this time. To do so before there is even a legally described route is virtually unprecedented. That description won’t come until the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) presents a Record of Decision (ROD) after the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for Tier I, which has not even been issued yet. What’s the hurry?

Amending I-69 into the LRP and TIP is not connected to the grants INDOT is trying to bribe communities with. This MPO should study the probable impacts of the proposed I-69 and it can apply for the grant money to help, but it can and should do this before I-69 is put into the LRP and TIP. The grants do not depend on these amendments.

You are not required to participate in an obvious political strategy meant to lock-in I-69 to this corridor and make it more difficult for a future governor to change it. Your vote to amend these plans is a vote to endorse I-69 through Bloomington/Monroe County. That’s really all this is for, that’s how it will be presented to FHWA and other agencies by INDOT and other promoters. This is a deceptive, back door tactic that is contrary to the wishes of a great number of Bloomington/Monroe County citizens as previous public meetings and the Bloomington City Council’s Declaration have shown. You should have no part of it.

There is a provision in the MPO Public Involvement Process for citizen workshops to study any issue such as this. Why don’t we have those study groups before we put I-69 into our plan after we have more information?

This amendment calls for the MPO to “...work closely with INDOT to study local transportation impacts associated with more limited access along the corridor.” Why is there no mention in this amendment of working closely, or at all, with directly impacted citizens and businesses? You are supposed to be working for us and with us, not just Brian Nicol and his huge, undemocratic beurocracy to bulldoze our properties and us.

Your Public Involvement Process states: “Residents and businesses directly affected by various projects will receive direct mailings announcing meetings/ workshops.” You haven’t even done that. Businesses along SR-37 that may lose access would be very interested. Your vote to put I-69 into our LRP will have direct and immediate impacts on the lives and property values of many, many families and businesses. This is not just some technical detail. You are helping to take away the value of peoples’ property and seriously disrupting their lives for a project that may never be built. All of the loses due to this proposed interstate are real and immediate, all the presumed benefits are highly speculative.

There is no money, federal or state, currently available to construct I-69. If the State goes ahead with I-69 the State, as Senator Lugar has clearly posited, the State will pay for it. The 80/20 split Brian Nicol points to is very misleading. If they build I-69 many other projects in Monroe County, Bloomington and around the State will go unfunded. This is a certainty. I-69 will be a money sink, swallowing up transportation funds from every part of Indiana’s budget, as Senator Borst has written.

Brian Nicol is a salesman; he is trying to sell you I-69. Like all salesmen, he points out the good and ignores the bad. He will promise you interchanges and overpasses and ped/ bike paths in order to sell you his product. Unfortunately, he is not averse to the old advertising gimmick called “bait and switch”. Once you agree to buy I-69 he will almost certainly come back and say: gee, we really wanted to give you all these nice amenities but our budget just won’t accommodate it. So we’ll give you this lower valued product—but won’t charge you any more—Bait and Switch. Brian Nicol and INDOT cannot be trusted to tell you the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. I have seen them lie and deceive and misrepresent their product for 13 years.

INDOT’s LRP shows I-69 construction beginning in 2017. What is the big push to include it in our LRP now? We have plenty of time to study and plan and we should do that, but we should not include a project with unknown consequences, but with immediate negative impacts, in our LRP. We should act based on knowledge and demonstrated facts, not a whole list of hype and uncertainties. You don’t know enough to be voting “yes” on I-69. How many of you have even read, carefully and objectively, all of the Draft EIS, not to mention our, and others, expert critiques of it?

You could decide, after all the information is known, that I-69, as planned, would not be good for Bloomington/Monroe County. You can’t know that yet. Study first, endorse later.

John Smith – Count Us and Count Us Pac

If this MPO wants to save the community from this then denounce these routes to represent homeowners. John spoke of his house as 1000 feet from route 3d currently not chosen as a potential route. John discussed his attendance at the Bloomington North High School meeting recently as he has sat through all of the INDOT meetings. All the police were represented here. His wife didn’t make any speeches here because the microphone broke so INDOT decided not to take anymore comments after that but went on to describe how his wife’s gardens are huge and that she has several of them. They cannot be replaced and this would have taken their house or at least come very close to it. 90:6 people were for versus against this after this meeting. Chamber said they assume this will be built and encourages planning. If it isn’t built it will be irresponsible to have supported it. John mentioned how he has met many people who are affected by this plan.

Marc Haggarty- resident

Marc said he owns 40 acres and cannot sell this property now due to not knowing whether it will be part of this plan. Marc said he understands the perception of this hostility. Marc was at the BHS North meeting. Many did not get a chance to speak. Mark Stupes didn't even get a chance to speak- a government elected official. Marc finished by saying everyone has a right to speak but also to alter and reform our government at any time.

Tracy Lutes – Monroe County Building Association

Represents herself and as a realtor. All wish to sell homes and if no time is taken to plan Tracy said she can't help people. As a builder she sees them and talks to the homeowners everyday. Tracy said she is not getting rich off of them but helping them find good homes.

On behalf of the Monroe County Building Association Tracy said they want responsible planning. It will prevent traffic issues, see to the needs of the people, and more. Access to frontage roads will ease streets feeding in. It might provide better traffic flow from residential to commercial spaces.

Melissa McReynolds

Urges MPO not to include these amendments. It would be irresponsible at this time.

Joe Anderson – Bloomington Bicycle Club

How this will effect bicycling Joe said he is not sure. Bloomington is famous for bicycling due to roads available and given low traffic and scenic routes. Joe urged MPO to do what they can to plan for the future for access of bicycles to cross I-69. More traffic on Old St. Rd. 37 or Bottoms Road will make it hard on bicyclists. It ought to include the paths it may come across.

Brian Garvy

Focus directly. To vote for this today is a political vote because there is no money and headlines need to be made – even the little headlines, often amount to large public awareness. Brian quoted Senator Borst as saying is was an “illusion’.

Nicole DiCamillo - INPIRG

There is an assumption that an interstate will bring economic development. Nicole continued to also quote Senator Borst that he said it will bring 3% annual inflation but Nicole asked how can the city of Bloomington and its residents afford this?

William Claytor – Resident and IU Student

Williams said there are better ways to plan our time and money

Susan Graves – President of Bloomington Board of Realtors

Best possible Planning is critical to be visionary. Make sure it is best for our city. Consider all of the possibilities.

Terry Green – Resident

Focus on other projects for the people in our community.

Talisha Coppock- Downtown Bloomington Commission

Mixed feelings about I-69 but wants to plan and do what needs to be done.

Michael Redman

Michael said he agrees planning is a good and important thing but there is still no official route. Ground breaking won't happen for years. If MPO passes this amendment it sends a message the citizens are fine with this and that doesn't seem to be the case

Sandra Tokarski – Hoosier Environmental Council

As a statewide environmental advocacy group they oppose I-69 through Bloomington. Sandra said the November election spoke boldly electing those who oppose it as well.

Barbara Anderson – Resident

If the time comes all should be ready and see this like a Hope Chest - to plan and make positive plans for the future. This community has to be ready and fight to the end for those who want to fight. Don't stop planning.

Bill Hayden – resident

The issue isn't planning today. The issue is whether to endorse these amendments or not. Appreciate public comment but before MPO vote today, think about how this is still in the Tier 1 phase, which still has a long way to go until it is finished. Changing these documents isn't going to solve anything.

David Sabbagh – City Council

It is his understanding that CREDO is in favor of these amendments He said he respects Joe and Barb Anderson as they have suggested the importance of planning but not all of the elected City Council is opposed to I-69 so don't be mislead by these comments.

Linda Lasowski

Linda own property along route 3c. Linda asked the MPO to refocus considerations today. Consider this from an economic standpoint. No serious investor would invest in property or land in this area without knowing what their Record of Decision (ROD) is. If there is a positive ROD we'd be hearing about it in the news, from the state, from INDOT but no one is talking about it. The cost of living will go up due to municipal needs and this needs to be taken into consideration.

Mark Stuppes – Monroe Agricultural Council

Written notification to all property owners within a 5000-foot distance was not given. All of the people impacted need to know what is happening. Mark said he opposes any new interstate and has right of way acquisition. All long and short term traffic impacts to be negatively noteworthy.

Alexander Bigelow- Resident

Listen to the people and not just the special interests groups before making a vote.

Kevin Endright

CAP has made the list 2 times (I-69). The estimated costs have doubled since. Kevin asks to draft an Environmental Impact Study before making a decision. The estimated costs are at \$45 billion dollars – 6 times greater than the FHA posts today on their website. There is a serious lack of communication. It is the responsibility of public officials to give information to the public.

1/17/1997- inclusions as part of Common Thoroughfare plan-to be reviewed each year – this is not happening. Indian Creek Township needs answers to many questions.

## ***MPO Comments***

Andy Ruff

With all due respect to Planning Andy asked Tom Micuda what will really happen if MPO doesn't adopt these amendments now? How will the planning change? Tom responded that he didn't know what impact this would make on the community. Tom said he anticipates the City of Bloomington will be involved in Tier 2 planning no matter what the outcome of today's vote.

Bill Williams asked what happened to our 22 page response to INDOT and Tom said they are still waiting for comments on this.

Andy feels INDOT clearly doesn't need this to continue the project.

Of over 20000 written comments on EIS to INDOT 94% oppose it. Andy believes INDOT wants this passed not to avoid political and public opposition later down the road. All evidence suggests it doesn't have to happen now so why is INDOT pushing to do this now?

The next amendment is scheduled for 2005 unless needed before regular schedule. MPO hasn't been told or given a reason for why they have to add these amendments now. Andy continued to say the Mayor elect – opposes and wondered if this is why these amendments have been brought up now. This is the biggest transportation project in the history of the city of Bloomington. Can anyone really say what is good for the community? Takarski mentioned workshops and the biggest most controversial project needs more thoughtful consideration.

Jack Baker – Chair of the Citizen's Advisory Committee

Question is to plan or not to plan. Without it there is not community. Jack said he takes to path for vision and said he thinks these amendments are all about Planning.

Joyce Poling

Doesn't understand why this is a problem. We have heard from state and it seems as if it will go in this place.

Bill Stuebe - Plan Commission President

I hate to say this to a Bloomington - Monroe County audience, but I-69 is not about Bloomington or even about Monroe County, it is much bigger than us and it is going to happen whether we like or not. We had better recognize that and take an active role so that we can give serious input concerning what we want for our community in the way of exits, east-west roads, frontage roads, bike pedestrian crossovers and the like. If we hide our heads in the sand, fight it, deny it, we will get exactly what some one else gives us and not what we want. We better get with it. That is why I am in favor of this action.

Marty Hawk

15 to 16 years out is not asking too much. When you make a decision about your home, your gardens, wouldn't you like to know what will become of it in 15 years?

John Fernandez

Plan incorporated into zoning process. Important to transportation as MPO considers zoning for next few years so people won't be surprised later. It is not unusual to have this done this far out. After listening to Andy there doesn't seem to be enough staff analysis. It is important to know what amendment is, understand why people think it will be 'read' into, but the plan is written in facts. Public has to remember

the MPO is not the city. This is not an amendment for the benefit of INDOT but for the benefit of our community.

Andy Ruff

Motion to amend the amendments Notification amendment from John Smith (handed out at meeting).

Other MPO members said they would like more evaluation on it, it needs to be studied as it was just handed out at this meeting. One member voted in support of the proposed amendment.

Other comments were that public needs to know what is happening and work needs to be done toward getting this information out about amendments proposed, meetings. Not everyone reads newspaper and it seems to be the only way people can find out about these things.

Jack Baker

Jack recommends MPO look into how we hold our public meetings. Timelines were short and have been short and some care needs to be taken in this regard.

Motion to amend the amendments did not pass 2-7.

Motion to call the vote, motion seconded.

Vote on the first Amendment (Long Range Plan) Passed 9-1

Vote on the second Amendment (TIP) Passed 9-1

VI. Adjournment